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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the stories of eight students who did not complete their college education with their SOUL (Society of Unlimited Learning) classmates. SOUL was a program designed to integrate economically and academically disadvantaged black students into the life of William Paterson College (New Jersey) in the summer of 1968 and consisted of students taking two speech courses and being assigned an advisor. The original cohort of SOUL consisted of 9 female and 11 male students--8 students who did not graduate from the college underwent extensive interviews. Four dominant themes emerged: (1) all of the former students highlighted the importance they placed on both speech courses they took; (2) the relationship between the faculty advisor or mentor and the student had a significant impact on a student's capability to complete his or her college education; (3) the teachers' beliefs in their ability to teach these students was a major ingredient in their performance; and (4) the sustaining worth of the SOUL program over time was revealed in the interviews. Findings suggest that those students who did not graduate with their cohort were not failures: the program contributed to their self-confidence, oral expression skills, and love of learning--the secondary effects impacted the participants far beyond the life of SOUL and emerge as the ultimate triumph of the SOUL program. (Two tables of data are included.) (RS)

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A DESCRIPTIVE PROFILE OF AN INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN FOR STUDENTS "AT RISK" OF ACADEMIC FAILURE

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ABSTRACT

A DESCRIPTIVE PROFILE OF AN INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN
FOR STUDENTS "AT RISK" OF ACADEMIC FAILURE

This research recounts results of project S.O.U.L. [Society Of Unlimited Learning],a successful program implemented to support minority students. A profile emerges of the unsuccessful student in the successful program. The data establishes the value of speech communication education for culturally diverse students, the sustaining effect of speech communication course work, reasons for gender variances in pupil achievement, and the value of a professor's belief in their ability to teach minority students.

A DESCRIPTIVE PROFILE OF AN INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN FOR STUDENTS "AT RISK" OF ACADEMIC FAILURE

This research examines the impact and sustaining effect of a program designed to integrate economically and academically disadvantaged black students into the life of a United States college community in the summer of 1968. Dwelling on the past can present a severe problem in formulating changes in academic policies, while using the past to identify patterns of success and failure can be helpful and enlightening for future planning. The efficacy of project SOUL [Society Of Unlimited Learning] is examined at the time it took place and during the following twenty-four years to assess its long term merit.

This article introduces the results of current investigation regarding the stories of the pupils who did not complete their college education with their SOUL classmates. A profile emerges of the unsuccessful student in the successful program. These students, who represent the statistical failures of the SOUL approach, supply an understanding of the value of speech communication courses and their relationship to other needed aspects in programs of support for culturally diverse students.

BACKGROUND

Higher education was challenged in the mid-sixties by the disadvantaged black student population. Colleges responded in a variety of ways with diverse programs. The William Paterson College of New Jersey was one of them. At that time, William Paterson was known as Paterson State and referred to as the "lily

white college on the hill." it was situated in a mountainous region of the north-west section of the state, on the outskirts of the industrial city of Paterson. Of its student body of 3500 only 10 were black.

During the summer of 1968, William Paterson's response to diverse student demands and the needs of the community was the institution of the SOUL Program. In an attempt to increase the number and the achievement of black students, the SOUL project took twenty young black women and men from the Paterson area and brought them on campus for a four week preparatory program before entering college in the fall. They lived in the dormitories with a male professor and a female student assistant. During the day they attended classes covering English, reading, math, speech, and communication skills; and in the evening participated in recreation, study, and cultural events.

The SOUL students took two speech courses. One was a basic speech course, comparable to the basic skill areas of English, math, and reading. The other was an oral communication class. The oral communication instruction was not restricted to the classroom setting. An integral important phase of this course work was attendance at plays, poetry readings, debates, community meetings, and college gatherings. These events or activities, which in many programs are looked upon as ancillary, were a central component in project SOUL. Also, half of the pupils were enrolled in a speech clinic to alleviate individual voice and articulation problems. Students remained in clinic until the

difficulty was eliminated.

TABLE I

STUDENT 1 MALE SAT: V391 M299	EXIT GPA 3.0	DEGREE: BA 1972
STUDENT 2 MALE SAT: V284 M297	EXIT GPA 3.0	DEGREE: BA 1975 MA 1979
STUDENT 3 MALE SAT: V304 M360	EXIT GPA 2.62	DEGREE: BS 1973 MA 1978
STUDENT 4 MALE SAT: V308 M347	EXIT GPA 2.22	DEGREE: BA 1978
STUDENT 5 MALE SAT: V287 M357	EXIT GPA 2.68	DEGREE: BA 1972
STUDENT 6 MALE SAT: V377 M280	EXIT GPA 3.31	DEGREE: BA 1972 MA. PH.D.
STUDENT 7 MALE SAT: V284 M297	EXIT GPA 2.10	DEGREE: BA 1972
STUDENT 8 MALE SAT: V335 M338	EXIT GPA 2.19	DEGREE: BA 1978
STUDENT 9 MALE SAT: V308 M347	EXIT GPA 2.71	DEGREE: BA 1972
STUDENT 10 MALE SAT: V358 M346	EXIT GPA 1.56	WITHDRAW 1969
STUDENT 11 MALE SAT: NOT AVAILABLE	EXIT GPA 1.59	SUSPENDED 1970
STUDENT 12 FEMALE SAT: NOT AVAILABLE	EXIT GPA 2.51	DEGREE: BA 1972 MA 1977
STUDENT 13 FEMALE SAT: V274 M357	EXIT GPA 2.27	DEGREE: BA 1972
STUDENT 14 FEMALE SAT; V284 M297	EXIT GPA 2.80	DEGREE: BA 1972
STUDENT 15 FEMALE SAT: V349 M290	EXIT GPA .52	WITHDRAW 1969
STUDENT 16 FEMALE SAT: NOT AVAILABLE	EXIT GPA 1.40	SUSPENDED 1971
STUDENT 17 FEMALE SAT: NOT AVAILABLE	EXIT GPA 3.0	WITHDRAW 1969
STUDENT 18 FEMALE SAT: V274 M386	EXIT GPA .29	WIHDRAW 1970
STUDENT 19 FEMALE SAT: V274 M328	EXIT GPA NOT AVAILABLE	WITHDRAW
STUDENT 20 FEMALE SAT: V322 M405	EXIT GPA NOT AVAILABLE	WITHDRAW

All of the courses were taught by established members of full time faculty, holding Ph.D. degrees. The professors stayed on campus all day and were readily available for informal counseling and interaction with the students. Each participant was assigned a professor who served as their faculty advisor. These dyads remained in place throughout the students entire college pursuit.

The original cohort of SOUL consisted of nine female students and eleven male students. Their average combined Verbal and Mathematical score on the Scholarship Aptitude Test [SAT] was 646. Sixty percent or twelve of the original SOUL group of twenty graduated from William Paterson College [see Table I]. Three of nine female students and nine of eleven male students received baccalaureate degrees. Three of the men have since earned master's degrees and one has a Ph.D. One of the women has a master's degree.

These statistics demonstrate the success of the SOUL Program. They also create some questions. Why did a larger percentage of males than females complete their education with their classmates? Albeit its success, why did this program seem to fail nearly half of its participants?

PROCEDURE

In the summer of 1991, in an attempt to answer the preceding questions, the eight people who had not completed their college education with their SOUL colleagues were sought. All eight of the former students were located and consented to lengthy

interviews. These interviews establish the reasons the former students did not complete college, their general view of the SOUL program, their perception of the significance of speech course work in their academic performance, and the value of project SOUL in their lives and their present professions. The findings from these interviews are presented in the following eight profiles [see Table II].

TABLE II

PROFILE A FEMALE STUDENT 20 TABLE I	VICE PRES BANK	AA, BA
PROFILE B FEMALE STUDENT 19 TABLE I	INSURANCE	CERTIFICATE PROGRAM
PROFILE C FEMALE STUDENT 17 TABLE I	TEACHER	BA, MA
PROFILE D FEMALE STUDENT 18 TABLE I	COMPUTER	BUSINESS INSTITUTE
PROFILE E FEMALE STUDENT 16 TABLE I	DATA ENTRY CLERK	
PROFILE F FEMALE STUDENT 15 TABLE I	ATT	AA
PROFILE G MALE STUDENT 11 TABLE I	OWNS 3 RESTAURANTS	AA
PROFILE H MALE STUDENT 10 TABLE I	CIVIL SERVICE 21YRS	

PROFILE A

[Student 20 Table I]

Student A is presently a vice president of a bank. She remembers the SOUL Program with fondness. When she started the program, she had mixed feelings concerning it. She came from a community outside of Paterson so she did not know the other people in the program. It was the first time she was away from home and her friends.

Initially, she was frightened and lonely. These feelings changed quite rapidly and she was soon making friends with other students and enjoying her new freedom. She recalls the excitement she experienced making her own decisions. "I know I discovered I liked being in control."

Her favorite class was speech. It took her a little while to reach as she puts it "a comfort level", but once there, she recollects a great deal of pleasure delivering speeches. For the first time others were listening to her and paying attention to her ideas. It was a powerful feeling for a young woman.

Another class student A enjoyed was the oral communication course. She called it cultural communication [a misnomer]. The trips to New York City to see performances by the Negro Ensemble Company and the plays at St. Marks Place remain a lasting memory. She credits these outings and the class sessions which followed, where what was seen was discussed, with forming a major portion of her social development.

Student A did not have any role or peer models. Nor does

she recall a mentor, although the records indicate she was assigned one. He was a male professor. Obviously, this was not a meaningful relationship.

The reason she left the SOUL Program was because she had a child. She married and moved to Virginia. She returned to school to continue the education she had postponed. First, she received an associate degree with honors. Later, she earned a baccalaureate degree. She has done post graduate work at the American Institute of Banking.

When she was contacted she was surprised to find herself on the "failed to complete the program list." She has consistently thought of herself as a success, and would "beg to differ with anyone who saw her as otherwise." Today as a vice president of a large banking institution, she looks back on the SOUL Program as the first step in her notable career. She credits it with opening her eyes to the possibilities available to her, providing her with opportunities to develop self-worth and to trust others, thereby giving her a vision of what she could achieve.

PROFILE B

[Student 19 Table I]

Student B relocated to North Carolina, where she works for a major insurance company. When reached she was happy to talk about the SOUL Program. For her, it is remembered as fun. She said: "There wasn't much to dislike." "In fact, it was too short."

It was the first time she was away from home. She loved

spending time with the other students and living on campus. Student B took pleasure in the sports activities, particularly tennis. During this period, she learned to play the game and continues to enjoy playing tennis today.

She especially liked the oral communication class and the cultural activities that the class attended. Student B said she was on the shy side, but she recalls being comfortable in her speech class. It too, she describes as "fun." Her favorite course was English. Reading was a favored pastime and her English teacher introduced her to many exciting books.

A mentor or faculty advisor is not recalled. Her records indicate she was assigned a male faculty advisor. She did have a peer model. It was [Student 17 Table I] profile C. She admired this student for her outgoing nature and apparent self-confidence. Student B would like to have been more like her peer model. She believes her model evidenced more maturity.

Many things distracted student B. She married, left school, and had a baby. Returning to college is something she has always contemplated. She is proud she completed a certificate program as part of the requirements for her present position. She has been employed by the insurance company, where she now works, for 15 years. The job is enjoyable, but recently she has become interested in deaf education and she would like to go back to school.

PROFILE C

[Student 17 Table I]

When the researcher communicated with student C, she was pleased to report that she had returned to college after she left the SOUL Program. She was awarded a bachelor of arts degree in Secondary Education and later earned a masters degree in Special Education. She currently teaches high school English in New York City.

She believes the SOUL Program helped prepare her for an academic career. She says: "it was a great opportunity, that provided support for everyone." As far as recalling anything negative, Student C can not. It was a totally beneficial training for her.

Her father was a military man and she and her mother had lived in many locations with him. She was accustomed to making new friends. The adjustment to the campus and life in the dorms presented fewer challenges for her than it did for some of her classmates. She recalls she felt comfortable from the very beginning.

Her favorite class was English. She remembers a woman who taught English who had a lasting impact on her and her professional choices. She describes the teacher as always caring with a determined drive that her students would achieve. In a word "great." It is the same English professor mentioned by student B.

The oral communication class also stands out in her memory. She saw Hair, Shakespeare, and the Negro Ensemble company, among others. Learning from drama fit well with her personality. She

recalls speaking and making comments in classroom discussions regarding insights from these performances.

Student C does not believe she had a faculty advisor. As with several other students, one was assigned to her but she recalls no meeting with him. She did have a role model. She was the English professor, previously mentioned. Student C says: "She [the professor] respected the students and their struggle. I believe in us she saw intellect in search of form."

Student C left the program when she married and had a baby. She returned to college a year later to complete her BA degree. The SOUL Program and the people she met provided good examples for her. There were many models for her to follow. Today, as a teacher, she conducts herself as they did and treats her students with the same interest and respect she received.

PROFILE D

[Student 18 Table I]

"It opened my eyes." was Student D's first response when she was asked: "What do you remember about the SOUL Program?". The comment refers to a number of things. She says it was the first time she really ever thought about the dichotomy between black and white. She grew up in a black neighborhood and was comfortably immersed in a predominately black culture. Attending college was something she had never even considered. When the opportunity to become part of the SOUL Program was explained to her she was excited about college, but not prepared.

In the opening days of the program, she learned for the

first time what was going on. She began to question things. During the group discussions students were able to "talk issues out." Exploring concerns and interacting with others in this way was new to her. The fuel for many of these exchanges occurred when the oral communication class attended plays and other performances.

The ones student D still clearly recalls were at least three trips to see the Negro Ensemble Company. She met Ozzie Davis and Ruby Dee and talked about her future plans and goals with them. These were plans and goals that had not occurred to her prior to entering the program. She is still at work determined to achieve these ambitions.

She is currently in an associate degree program at a county college. The degree should be awarded in 1992. She has never given up. She says "it doesn't make sense to give up." A lot of effort has been expended to this point. The bachelors degree is her goal and she plans to continue her education. She always regrets leaving college in 1970.

She recounts that she could not relate to the man who was supposed to be her counselor. She did not feel he understood her needs or the pressures she was under. She was not receiving support at home. Her family believed she should be working to help with the financial needs of her younger siblings. When she got a part time job, her grades began to slide. After a final semester of struggles, she decided the balancing act was too difficult to maintain. In the fall, she did not return to

school.

She remembers many of her classmates with pleasure. Her role model was student Profile C [Student 17 Table I]. This young woman was always an example for her. In retrospect she wishes she would have been more open with this student. Perhaps there was another way to solve her family problems.

After she left college she had a daughter. She went to the Chubb Institute to learn computer programming. Today she is a computer programmer. It is a good job, but she still wants to be a teacher. Ironically, the Assistant Dean of Humanities and Technologies at the county college she now attends was a former classmate in the SOUL Program [Student 6 Table I]. She remembers him as the class clown.

PROFILE E

[Student 16 Table I]

Student E's memories of the SOUL program are not as enthusiastic as some of her classmates. She initially liked the program, but started losing interest during the first year. She was not able to remain on campus. Her parents wanted her to stay at home. Her mother was afraid for her to go to New York so she never went on any of the cultural trips the oral communication class took.

For these reasons she did not spend much time with the other students. She says she began to look down on herself and envy the others. She regrets not being able to participate. Her advice to any young person today would be to stay on campus and

begin to break the bonds with your home and family

Student C [Student 17 Table I] was a peer model for her. Student E says Student C was different. She was composed and self-assured. In the classes they took together she admired the way she conducted herself. She appeared confident and possessed the independence that Student E craved.

She remembers a man who was a faculty advisor. He made her feel uncomfortable. She wishes her advisor would have been a woman. She needed someone with whom she could share the frustrations she had with her mother. Student E realized she was missing a lot of activities and would have liked to have a faculty advisor talk to her mother about the value of the trips to New York City.

Her parents were constantly pushing her. She felt more and more frustrated and finally left college in 1971. She married a year later. It was a bad marriage that lasted three years. She still wants to finish her education. Her present job as a data entry clerk is not fulfilling. She wonders aloud if perhaps now is the time for her to return.

PROFILE F

[Student 15 Table I]

Student F has a very good managerial position with ATT. She was employed by them soon after earning an Associate Degree from a community college. She originally left college and her SOUL classmates to marry and have a baby. The marriage failed. As a single parent, she endeavored to provide a quality life for her

daughter.

She returned to school in an effort to do this. She had maintained a relationship with Student A [Student 20 Table 1]. Through this friendship she was encouraged to go to college in the evenings. Remembering those busy days combining work and school, she wonders how she accomplished it. She is proud that she did.

Her responsibilities with ATT are exciting. They utilize many of the competencies she acquired during the Soul Program. First among them is a good speaking ability. The knowledge and confidence she learned in her speech class remain with her today. She feels comfortable leading training sessions. In a like manner, she attributes her ability with group management to the oral communication class. The numerous discussions, in which this class engaged, provided experience and example.

The oral communication class also afforded many opportunities to see plays. These she loved. She mentions Hair, some of the shows she saw at St. Marks Place and an art festival in Greenwich Village. The culture she was exposed to has remained with her. Drama, concerts and art shows continue to be an important part of her present life.

If she could change anything it would be to have the faculty advisor or mentor be more involved. Her male advisor did not get to know her. She regrets this as she believes with better counseling she might have stayed in college. It was her dream to stay in school forever.

Student F remains grateful for the SOUL Program. It was and remains an inspiration for her. "It gave us a chance to fit into another part of the world. The good people I met are still my friends."

PROFILE G

[Student 11 Table I]

Student G is now a successful business man. He remembers the SOUL Program as an opportunity to enter into college life with support. "We were different than the general population. The association with the students and teachers in SOUL prevented us from becoming overwhelmed." For him it was a great beginning.

He believes the speech communication class helped him with his ability to communicate and interact with others. He feels communication is a problem in our educational system today. There are fifteen year-old young people working for him who have little communication competence. He goes to schools and speaks to students in business about the value of work and good communication skills. These talks stress the immediate benefits and the healthy patterns for future growth that are established.

The oral communication course was valuable. He remembers seeing plays. Hair is the one he mentions. "The trips were enjoyable and they exposed me to other things. This course and the associated discussion let me work through my own uncomfortable feelings. It helped me integrate into the main stream."

His faculty advisor lived in the dorms with the male

students. Student G went to him and liked him. There was always easy access. "I felt I let him down when I left the college. At that time college wasn't for me. I became involved in drugs. I was addicted to heroin." Sadly, he says: "It wasn't the program's fault, it was my fault."

After a number of years, he entered a rehabilitation program. He became a drug counselor. He decided to leave the East and moved to Kansas. That is where he returned to college and earned an associate's degree. Presently, he is in an accelerated degree program in business management. Achieving a baccalaureate degree has always been an unfinished part of his life.

Today, he owns three restaurants, is a happy husband and the proud father of two children. He enjoys being in a service business. Student G continues to draw from his background with the SOUL Program. He says: "These experiences were extremely crucial to my success. I value the doors that were opened. Education unlocks your mind. I am sorry it took me a couple of years to realize this."

PROFILE H

[Student 10 Table I]

He remembers the SOUL Program was interesting and worthwhile, providing him with an opportunity to see what college was all about. The early days were a time of adjustment. Bonding with their SOUL classmates took place before they were thrust in with the other students.

The video taping of his speeches in speech communication is a vivid memory. The use of the technology impressed him. He was fascinated with seeing his speeches and feels it really helped increase his speaking ability.

His role model was his faculty advisor. This was the professor who lived in the dormitory with the male students. They had lengthy discussions that lasted long into the night. He was easy to talk with and a warm friendly relationship developed.

Hair and The Great White Hope are two of the plays he recalls seeing as part of the oral communication course. These trips were exciting. Two of the students who attended these productions with him became peer models. They were student 3 and student 6 on Table I. He admired their ability to analyze and understand the dramas' application to their lives.

He left college because of personal problems. He amplifies this statement by saying he needed to work. He has a good job as a medical inspector for the state of New Jersey. He has been a civil service employee for 21 years. Going back to college is still a goal. "I have always regretted leaving."

ANALYSIS

The preceding profiles provide individual snapshots of the eight former SOUL students who did not complete college with their classmates. They are each unique human beings with specific characteristics. In a more general manner, their profiles contain over-arching common qualities. When reviewing their stories four dominant themes emerge. The first is the

value they each attach to their speech courses. **Second** is the importance of the relationship between the student and the faculty advisor or mentor. **Third** is the teachers' belief in their ability to teach these students. The **fourth** is the sustaining worth of the program over-time.

One...All of the former students highlighted the importance they placed on both of the speech courses they took. The basic speech course was one in which they delivered speeches that they had written. They prepared and practiced with classmates, often working in teams. Video taping the speeches was exciting as well as a learning experience. They enjoyed the exposure and quite quickly became comfortable expressing their thoughts, ideas, and beliefs.

The professor who taught this class remembers working with them on voice, diction, articulation and pronunciation. They were cautious but eager students who worked diligently to correct and improve their voices. There were exercises in and out of class and those who needed it were sent to the speech clinic [A. Maltese, personal communication, January 30, 1992].

It was this basic speech course that gave them the foundation for their education. When speaking in public became comfortable they achieved a higher level of competence in a variety of arenas. The added self confidence in their ability to communicate permitted them to ask questions and participate more fully in other classes.

This illustrates the findings of a classic study reported by

the National Institute of Education supporting the need for the inclusion of oral communication skill classes in college programs. The study found in cognitive areas, competency in classification, causation and logical deduction require oral expression. Affective skills such as adhering to instructors goals, appropriate classroom behavior, and the ability to work both independently and cooperatively with other students, demand communication abilities. Verbal proficiency was deemed essential to the final grade in all freshmen level courses [Miller, 1978, p. 5].

The oral communication class is the other speech class that every former student counted portentous. Cultural communication, interpersonal communication and group communication were its constructs. There were many trips taken to theatrical events. Following these performances, candid group discussion took place about the concepts revealed in the plays. Within the confines of this speech class the SOUL participants were able to experiment with new ideas and integrate them with their old views of the world.

Both of these speech communication courses have served these former students well throughout the years. They have felt secure with their speaking abilities and have relied on them consistently. They credit the comfort level they acquired in these speech classes, over twenty years ago, with imparting a communication competence they rely on today.

TWO...The relationship between the faculty advisor or mentor

and the student had a significant impact on a student's capability to complete their college education. Six of the eight students who did not earn their degree with their classmates are women. The records indicate that the male and female academic abilities were not dissimilar. A critical difference was the disparity between the men and women's faculty advisors.

The program support for the women was not identical with the support for the men. The male students lived on campus with a male professor in their dormitory. He was available to them at all times. The two male students, who did not finish college at the time, even remark about his accessibility and his positive influence on their lives. One former student still feels he let this advisor down. The male students have positive recollections of their male advisor.

There was no female counter-part for the male dormitory advisor. The women lived on campus. A student assistant was in charge of their dormitory. The women were assigned a male faculty advisor. This did not seem to work well for the female students. Many indicate they were not comfortable with the relationship. Not one of the women remembers a satisfying experience with their assigned male faculty advisor.

This finding is consistent with current research that indicates that same sex mentor/mentee relationships have a greater opportunity for success. A 1990 Canadian study found that two women generally treat a mentoring relationship as a

friendship, while men manage it as an alliance. Women advisors provide more personal counseling to their protegees. They take their discussions beyond the school or work setting. In order for women to feel comfortable with each other they generally need to have a broader base of understanding [Lorine, 1990, p. 94].

The mixed gender pairing that existed in the SOUL program did not accommodate the affiliation style differences between men and women. As Deborah Tannen reported in <u>You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation</u>, a man's style is more literally focused on the message level, while a woman's style is focused on the relationship or metamessage level [1990: p. 142]. The lack of women faculty advisors for the female students was a disadvantage for the women students in the SOUL program.

THREE...The teachers' belief in their ability to teach these students was a major ingredient in their performance. The professors who were involved in the SOUL program were excellent experienced teachers. They were all Ph.D.s with a strong commitment to the ideals of the program. The students were aware of their teachers' convictions.

One former student put it this way: "We knew the college was giving us their best teachers and we wanted to give them our best effort." A former English professor in the program said: "We did not even entertain the idea of failure. It was our belief that these students could learn. We felt we could teach any population. Our expectations were high. The students assumed our expectations. We became partners!" [S. McNamara,

personal communication, July 11, 1991].

The power of one person's expectations to influence another person's behavior has long been recognized by physicians, behavioral scientists and, in more recent years, by teachers. From Albert Moll's clinical experience that indicated "the prophecy causes its own fulfillment" to Robert Rosenthal's Harvard experiments demonstrating a "teacher's expectation for a pupil's intellectual competence can come to serve as an educational self-fulfilling prophecy", there is ample evidence that a Pygmalion effect does exist [Livingston, 1988, p. 123].

Clearly the way the professors treated the students, from the SOUL Program, had an effect on their achievement. A key factor in this teacher student alliance was the instructors own positive self-regard. The professors' belief in their own ability created confidence and high expectations in the students.

FOUR...The sustaining worth of the SOUL Program over-time is revealed in these profiles. Each of the students was happy to talk about the program. Their memories were positive recollections. These remembrances were associated with good feelings about themselves and their development. They credit the program with contributing to their continued personal achievement.

As part of the SOUL Program, they obtained an ability to trust others. Their newly acquired interpersonal communication skills helped them establish a rapport with peers and professors. They created a common bond with students in the program and from

these beginnings were able to become involved with the rest of the college community. This mirrors Daloz's proposition that we require a safe place, "a holding environment" from which we can take our sense of who we are into the universe [1987, p. 37].

SOUL provided a unique window and their professors took them through the door of an academic world in which they were unfamiliar. These teachers imparted their philosophy of education and shared their knowledge. The students gained more assurance in dealing with highly educated people. They realized it was important to stay on an educational track. In the ensuing years, even those who did not earn a degree, continued to attend classes and study. These eight students simply took a longer road to success.

When they left the program, what they had learned in the program did not leave them. They were able to speak with a new competence. From their interactions with their professors and others in the SOUL program, they became familiar with dealing with thoughtful critical feedback. The former students do not view negative comments as personal assaults. They consider criticism as constructive and use it productively to help them grow.

Specifically, they mention the self confidence, the love of learning and the good study habits, acquired in the program. These are qualities that remain with them and help them accomplish the new goals they continue to set. Many years after they left the college, they acknowledge and give credit to the

sustaining characteristics of the skills and abilities acquired from the SOUL Program. They believe what they learned in the SOUL Program led them to the realization of their aspirations. These learnings continue to be a major component in the way they live their lives.

IMPLICATIONS

This retrospective look at the unsuccessful student in the successful program has several important implications for current educational procedures for students at risk. The attendant perils of cross-gender advising or mentoring is evident. With better relationships with their advisor or mentor some of the women who left the program would surely have continued. The research demonstrates an apparent benefit in same gender partnerships. Establishing same gender advisor/advisee pairs should be a priority in future programs.

The sustaining value the former SOUL students place on their speech communication courses is a persuasive reason for including speech courses in developmental education programs. Few colleges and universities consider oral speech a basic skill course. Entry level basic proficiency examinations are offered for reading, writing, and mathematics. In contrast, rarely are there entry level basic proficiency examinations in speech. The basic skill speech course is generally nonexistent. The success of the students from the SOUL Program hinged in large measure on the oral skills which they acquired in the program and made use of throughout their lives.

In studying the characteristics of this program in depth, the unconditional commitment of the professors to the students and their achievement is conspicuous. The pupils responded to the instruction; and from their perspective, they believed their tutelage was second to none. There was vitality and enthusiasm attached to the nurturing process. The professors' conviction that they could teach and the students would learn helped to form the common bond that became one of the major benefits of the SOUL Program. This finding indicates future strategies for diverse student populations should incorporate the use of experienced master teachers.

And finally, all too often the data is misunderstood. If you reviewed this 1968 program the eight students profiled represent the 40% who did not complete their college education with their classmates. They are the failures. However, these former students are not failures. The program did help them. The interviews show it contributed to their self-confidence, oral expression skills, and love of learning. The secondary effects that continue to impact the participants far beyond the life of SOUL emerge as the ultimate triumph of the SOUL Program.

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